



New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual

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Issuance:	29	Reporting Unusual Incidents (Regional Schools)	Revised:
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SUBJECT: Reporting Unusual Incidents

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 2, 1997

REVISED DATE: March 31, 2006

A. OBJECTIVE

To assure the prompt reporting, standardization of identifying incidents, and the appropriate investigation of unusual incidents, which occur at the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Office of Education (OOE), DCF Regional Schools, and designated contracted education programs, utilizing the DHS Unusual Incident Reporting and Management System (UIRMS).

B. STANDARDS

The DCF OOE and Regional Schools shall report unusual incidents in accordance with DHS Administrative Order 2:05 (Attachment 1) and this policy.

As determined by the DCF OOE, designated DCF contracted education programs shall report unusual incidents in accordance with the Addendum to DHS Administrative Order 2:05, "Community Reporting," (Attachment 2) and this policy.

C. PROCEDURES

1. The Education Supervisor (ES) or other authorized school staff person shall utilize the DHS UIRMS to report unusual incidents occurring at DCF Regional Schools.

2. The OOE UIR Coordinator or designee shall utilize the DHS UIRMS to report unusual incidents occurring at the DCF OOE.
3. The Director, OOE, shall designate the appropriate level(s) of access in the UIRMS for DCF OOE and Regional School staff who have been assigned reporting responsibilities.
4. The Director, OOE, shall identify and designate the DCF contracted education programs that shall report unusual incidents to the Office of Education.
 - a. The Education Supervisor (ES) at each of the designated contracted programs shall report unusual incidents by completing the Unusual Incident Report (UIR) paper form (Attachment 3).
 - b. The ES shall forward the completed UIR paper form to the appropriate OOE Regional Administrator (RA) and the OOE UIR Coordinator.
5. For all Reporting Level A+, A and B incidents and all other incidents categorized as abuse or neglect, the ES shall immediately place a telephone call to the responsible RA to alert him/her of the incident.
6. For all reporting level A+ and A incidents and all other incidents categorized as abuse or neglect, the RA shall notify the Director, OOE, or designee by placing a telephone call as soon as possible.
7. When a student is involved in an unusual incident, the ES or designee at the education program shall notify the parent/guardian/appropriate residential program staff and the student's district of residence contact person, as appropriate.
8. Level "C" incidents occurring at the DCF OOE and Regional Schools shall also be entered onto the UIRMS.
9. For any emergency situation, including a life-threatening emergency involving a student or staff person, the ES or designee shall immediately call 9-1-1.
10. The ES or designee at an education program shall investigate an unusual incident, as necessary, utilizing the following guidelines:
 - a. The Education Supervisor (ES) shall interview involved staff and obtain written, signed and dated statements from these staff whenever possible.
 - b. The ES shall interview any students that may have information regarding the incident and document any pertinent statements from these students.
 - c. The ES shall make and record observations about the physical environment that may yield some information about the incident.
 - d. The ES may confer with his/her immediate supervisor for assistance and an objective perspective on the incident.

- e. The ES may call law enforcement officials to assist in the investigation.
11. The ES shall examine all sources of information, when available, including internal and external investigations (such as reports or findings from IAIU and other entities); weigh the facts and evidence against the criteria in the definitions in DHS Administrative Order 2:05; arrive at an objective conclusion about the incident; determine the finding; and close out the Unusual Incident Report (UIR).
 12. The OOE UIR Coordinator shall review each UIR entered into the system for clarity, completeness and adherence to UIRMS procedures and shall provide assistance, as needed, to ameliorate any deficiencies.
 13. Any delay in completing a UIR, regardless of the reporting level of the incident, must be explained in the UIR and also communicated to the appropriate RA.
 14. In the event that the UIRMS cannot be accessed within the reporting timeframes, the ES shall notify the OOE UIR Coordinator of the problem by telephone.
 - a. The OOE UIR Coordinator shall inform the appropriate persons such as the Information Technology unit and the DHS Office of Program Integrity and Accountability (OPIA) about the technical difficulty.
 - b. Required reporting timeframes remain in effect when the database is unavailable.
 - c. The ES shall prepare the Incident Report, using the paper UIR form (Attachment 3), and either fax or e-mail it to their appropriate OOE RA and the OOE UIR Coordinator.
 - d. The ES or the OOE UIR Coordinator shall enter that UIR into the database as soon as the system becomes available.
 15. In the event the DHS Portal Page is inaccessible from the Network, access may be attempted “manually” through the address <https://uirms.dhs.state.nj.us>. If access is gained via this method, the User then will log on with his/her User Name, access the UIRMS section, enter his/her PIN and proceed with completing the UIR.
 16. In addition to the procedure for completion of the UIRMS, accidents and incidents involving any state vehicle shall be documented according to the “Procedure for Reporting Accidents/Incidents Involving State Vehicles” (Attachment 4).
 17. The Unusual Incident Report and the final report of the investigation of any unusual incident shall remain confidential and shall be maintained separately from the student’s educational records, in a secure manner that provides access only to individuals within the DCF who are directly involved in the reporting, processing or recording of such information.

18. Unusual Incident Reports shall be analyzed for trends and systemic issues; for the identification of significant factors associated with the occurrence of the unusual incidents; and for the possible need for corrective action.

- a. The ES shall analyze the UIR's for his/her DCF Regional School at least annually and make recommendations, as appropriate.
- b. The OOE UIR Coordinator shall analyze the UIR's for the DCF OOE, all DCF Regional Schools and all designated DCF contracted education programs at least every six months and make recommendations, as appropriate.
- c. The OOE UIR Coordinator shall participate in any departmental committee charged with reviewing UIR's.

Debra Stewart
Director

Attachments

[Attachment A-1](#): Administrative Order 2:05 (UIRMS)

[Attachment A-2](#): Addendum to A.O. 2:05 Community Reporting (UIRMS)

[Attachment A-3](#): UIR Paper Form

[Attachment A-4](#): Procedures for Reporting Accidents (State Vehicles)

<p>Note: This is a reproduction of a signed document. The original document is on file with the DCF Office of Education.</p>
